TOWER

TOWER '80

Literary Judges — **Dr. Sidney Vance**

William Cobb

Rufus Kinney

Art Judge — **Janis Golojuch**

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David Armstrong
Editor

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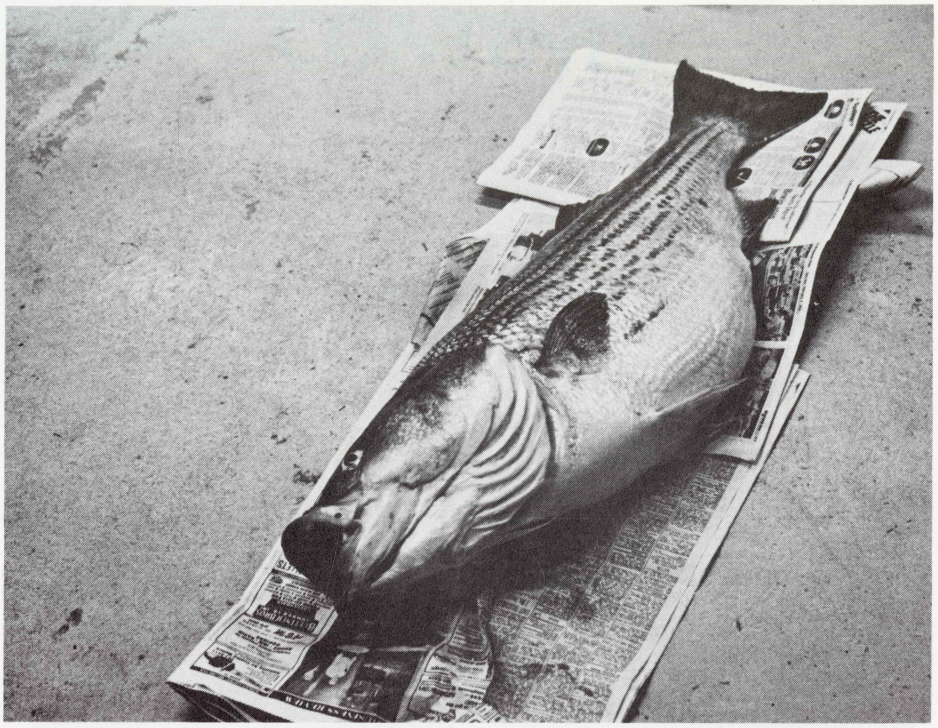
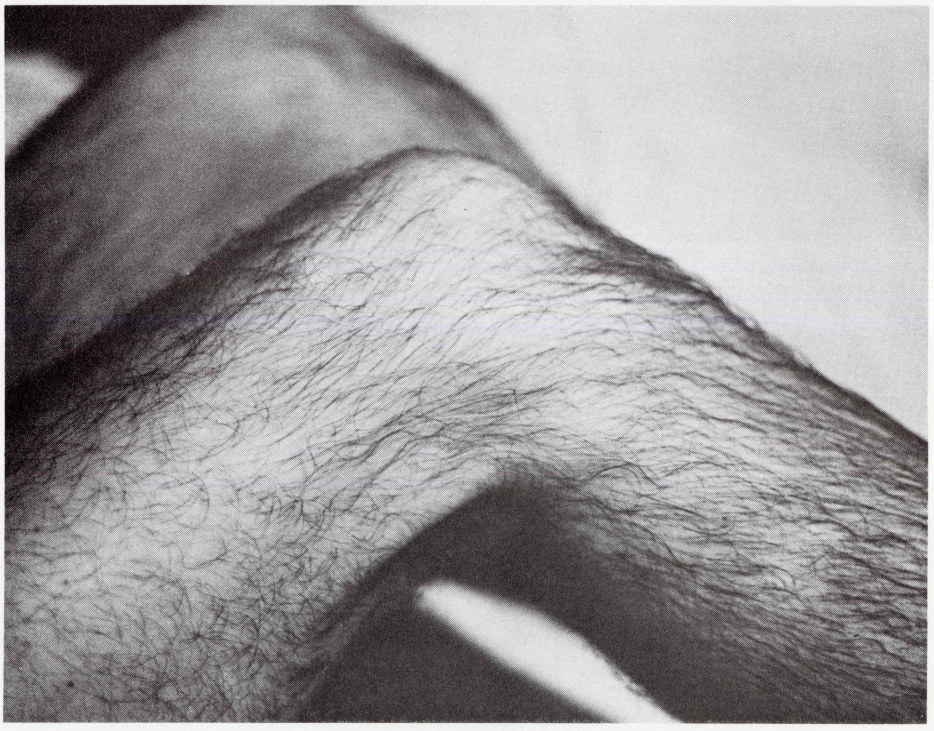
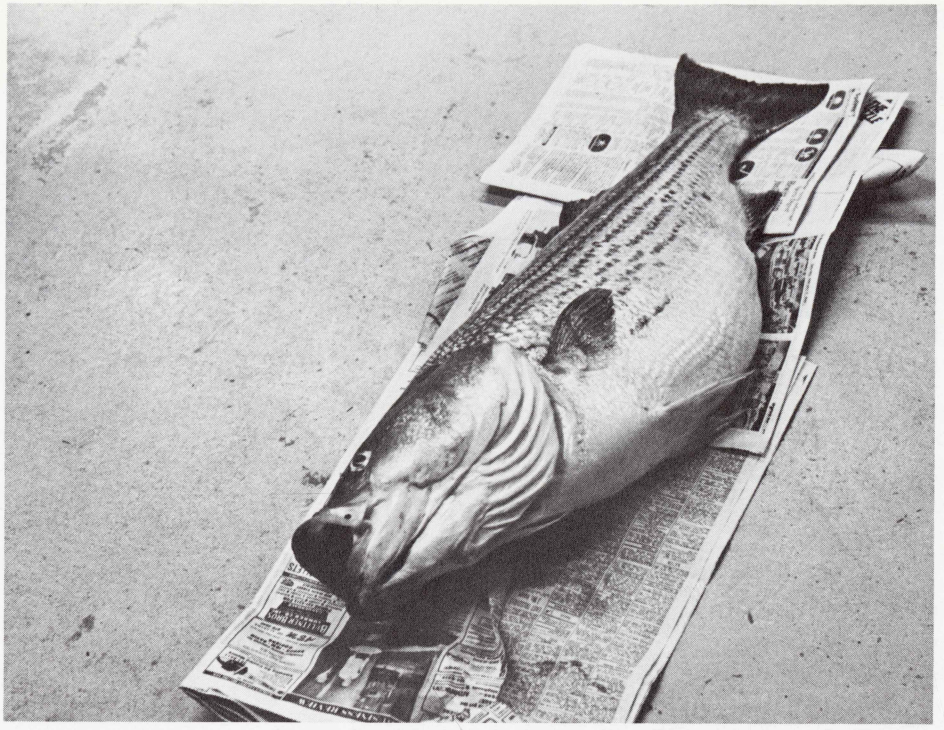
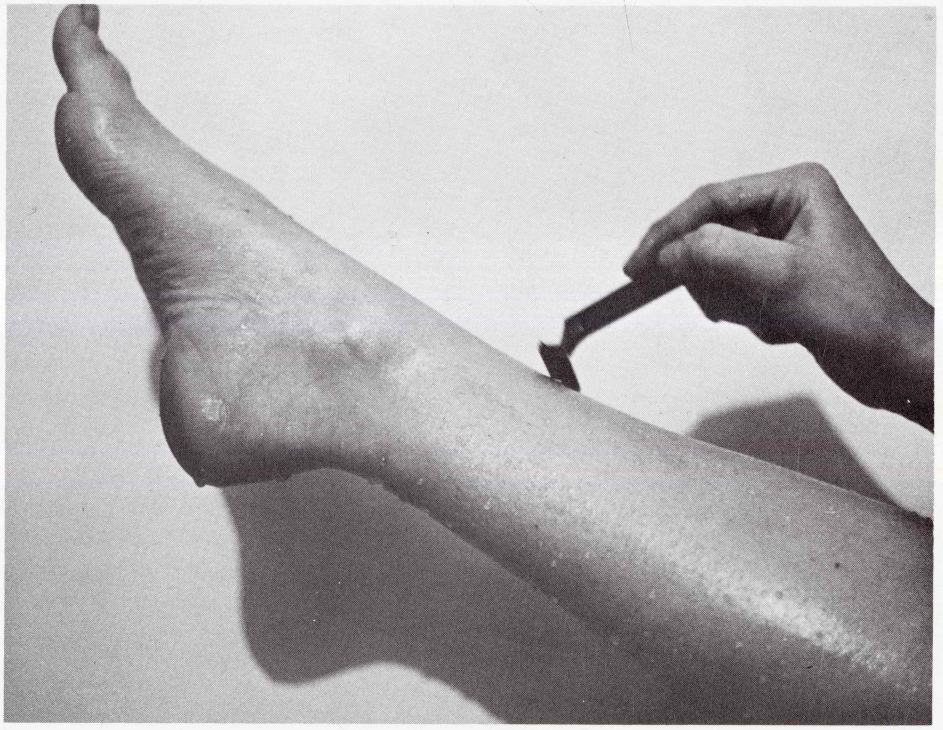




Vonda Schrader





Vonda Schrader

A WRITER'S AGONY

I compose another poem
wanting to express myself
to the world, but especially
to You.

I optimistically persist in thinking that maybe
this one will communicate my meaning —
my hidden feelings
about You.

You casually peruse my vulnerable confession
as I eagerly anticipate your reaction
wishing that you would recognize my sentiment
for You.

Your baffled countenance signifies your
all-too-obvious confusion
over my carefully penned ideals
of You.

I hope that my disappointment is well-concealed
for I am left floundering in despair;
everyone understands my poetry
except You.

Karen Levoy

Jealousy.
The germ of insecurity
infects me with this
horrid, repulsive cancer
spreading throughout my being;
contaminating everyone;
corroding my heart with selfishness;
narrowing my mind;
tainting my speech with bitterness;
gnawing my very soul;
leaving only an empty shell of
Humanity.

Karen Levoy

THE TOUCH

Standing at the window,
peering out between the beads
that melt and race across the glass,
familiar forms become unreal.
    Multi-colored; undefined,
as if they were the brush-work
of Matisse or Othon Friesz.

And with the rush of cold against my face,
I feel the presence.
    Icy fingers,
caked with sod and imposto,
caress the vision.

Colors without names once more
reveal the Mind of Man,
in which the Beast is free
    to howl forever.

David Jordan

A NIGHT IN THE WINTER WOODS

Dance leaves on the North Wind!
Dance leaves for your friend,
A friend who grabs you with hard,
    cold hands.
Sigh bare trees your sad old tune
Whisper pines beneath the moon
For now the Winter King rules the land.
    Dance leaves
    Whisper pines
    Sigh trees
    As full moon shines
        Blow wind
        Cold wind
    As full moon shines

James Knowles

Jamie Oaks

"WHEN THOSE COME KNOCKING AT THE CASTLE WALL . . ."
THE PEARL

When those come knocking at the castle wall
and you can no longer
hide in the sanctuary of your mind
will you take up your candle
and come forth
with your crucifix
    your prayerbook
and find the lost constellation
in the new moon night?

or will you
take the secret passage to your soul
and step out the steps
one by one
until your candle burnt out
you light your way
with hopes
of a new sunrise
on the shores of a forgotten paradise?

too pale now
the iron grating cannot protect you
even the walls have betrayed you
or perhaps grown weary with the battering
they crumble reluctantly
leaving you on your own
to face those who come
with prayerbook and crucifix
and the fires that purify every soul

what will you say to them?
how will you explain
that God speaks in whirlwinds
and in quiet summer breezes
that mysteries are only mysteries
until they are learnt
by those willing to share secrets

the knocking grows louder now
the voices grow fainter
and the once familiar faces slip away
into stone gargoyles
of a medieval cathedral
gothic
the century fades
the body grows cold
and the candle flickers in the night wind
as it begins its journey back to the stars

they will never know who you are
those who come knocking at the castle wall.

Isabella Scavetta

ODE TO NOCTURNAL ECONOMICS

Through eyes within my throbbing head
I watch the street where pleasures dwell;
Beneath the dismal lights of red —
For a glimpse of Heaven in a scene from Hell.

The marketplace!
Colourful, enticing,
Painted ladies show their wares.

An ancient rythm beating fast,
The timeless dance begins anew.
Hearts and dreams which couldn't last —
Forgotten til the night is through.

The marketplace . . .
Trapped, disappointed,
Burdened men subdued by cares.

Ponies of the carousel-set free-have come to taste
The sweetness of a poisonous art.
I've come to lay the past to waste;
To chase the darkness from a broken heart.

The marketplace!
Blending colours with desires
To spark raging thoughts and savage fires!

My eyes perceive unspoken things
Within the eyes of people there.
Devils fly on Angel's wings
To fleeting heights of deep despair.

The marketplace . . .
Dark and deep-mysterious well;
The wine of Heaven in a glass from Hell.

Dave Richardson

Dave Richardson

Marc McMahan

MAY 20

God conveniently died
for you
who never had time
for anyone
but yourself

I had half-a-mind
to change my name
but decided to wear it
like a scar
of the quarter century
we were forced
into each other's existence

if you never wanted me
then we must be even
for I never wanted you
with your dark eyes
and smile
guaranteed to win the strangers
and always the ladies

but then
not being either
how was I to be wined
and dined by you
until even I would
pull out those adjectives
you always waited to hear

bastard was your favourite
word
and the only one I ever heard
as you went cursing
through the circles of hell
dragging me after you
until I believed
heaven
was somewhere
in the circles below

who's to know
who'll close your eyes
tear the skin
off your face
and see beneath
your disguise:
the distorted features
of a grotesque monster
that feeds on hearts
of flesh and blood
at the midnight hour.

Isabella Scavetta

MAN IN THE MOON

A rider on a midnight horse
I come in shadows
with fears for the morning

stop me
if you can catch the north wind
and keep it
from penetrating through the cracks in your windows
I'll be the whistle through the eaves trough
lulling you to sleep
when the fires burn low
and you give way to dreams
where no riders come

but how will you explain
in the morning . . .
the barn door opened
the footprints in the snow
the corpse frozen in the yard
perfectly preserved with smile
and cowboy boots

whose ghost will I be then?

Isabella Scavetta

Robin Nance

Robin Nance

THE WOMEN IN THE MOON

Former ladies-of-the-houses
turn all gray and matriarchal,
gauged and visited.

No cyclic tide swells,
nothing lunar muses over
unaccustomed chants from ones so wane,
so cooled and pitted through revolutions.

Few of the alien grandfolk grow full.
They merely reflect
on the distant, prolific and multifarious worlds.

Francis Ford

NOON WASH

Wednesday washday bodes responsibility
(all piled
closeted and closed
and tumbled on my toes the harder
for each time put off with a pulled off sock
and a breathed off, "Later").

I am fortified
with chloride in a baggy back-pocketed.
Sins visited upon the world the weekend past,
sweats and smokes of put on splendors,
rasp my nose nasty fast.

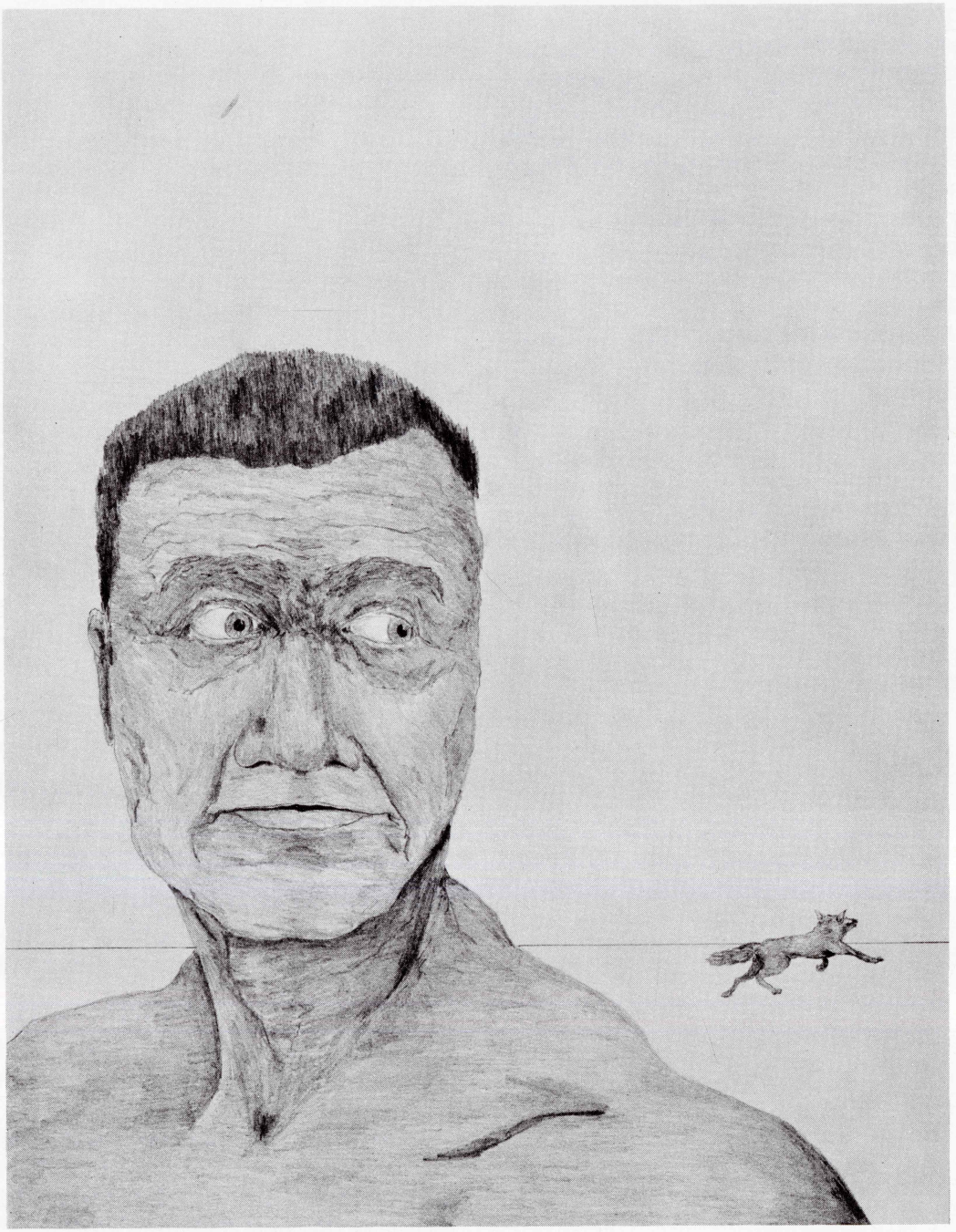
I am purified
by a liquor-baptised lick of my humanity,
my most original shame,
my decency's claim:
my smelly shirts and such borne in a bag
to wash.

Francis Ford

ANIMAL

She is hairy-armed animal enough,
and well trained stuff
too.
For through the over-time office building echo
of conserved lights low,
alone
she trotted past two Mens' Rooms
until
she found the proper place
to relieve herself of her
raw and terrible
burden.

Francis Ford



Dee Elling

PRIMEVIA

The fire draws too many.
Crouched close, each wants to spark heated thoughts
about a speared prey's roar
or a fiery mountain's death-pour
or a secret store of honey.
Heat lights too many eyes.
Wolf-brown eyes looking at this night's bleeding meat
and cat-green eyes looking sidelong at crotches
all look too much.
Like me, gray eyes looked into the fire.
Like me was one with eyes palest gray,
who walked near a river snake and walked slowly
for a day, a day ago.
A night past, I took shells of pink and gray
to the home of a fearful spirit hiding,
glad for a gift, I think.
A river snake hisses and bites.
He fears.
The fire burns,
hisses and bites on thrown-off bones.
Nights below now, I stretched against hard rock and grunted
alone, without others' looks —
surprise
fear
threat across the hot fire.
Then, fruit and honey found my hunger better.

Francis Ford

HYMN TO MINOA

Embracing ancient thought
and adding feminist wiles,
I searched amusement and mused music,
inviting a Muse.

Unpredictable Whimsey wrought
two-verse efforts in crinkled piles.
First eager fancy flew out loosed,
then mind fell weakened by frenzy's ruse.

Bare-breasted Minoa by Snake Goddess taught
leapt the greatest gulf, Time's miles,
and waved fists serpent-filled to make me confused
enough to praise her and light inspiration's fuse.

Alone now, exhaustion yet unfought,
again I call my Muse in her wild style.
She left my poor wits gladly amused
and put to half productive use.

Francis Ford

EVENING WALK

A lot like one Summer with friends
(taking the back step all busy, caffeine mid morning
and leaning alone there
and balking unfeeling gold and warm —
sugar wheat and wind
softer these nights than when gathered in
day's bright ribbon)

between flooding without all day
and flooding within tonight
fancy
must
pace

out and race away
on the private street,
chasten old bands on stalk
chaff across the gulf,
smother a chuckle in drowse
while warm and sweet
stay near,
until the pink knot ties another night.

Francis Ford

MORNING WAKE

Certain is the blaze through the blinds
to cut me open. Sharpened sureness,
isn't it?
Among the hands bladed to rip me
(not bland clock hands, which anesthetize
and comfort
with news of a few minutes left to sleep),
"Here comes the Sun"
and it's all right,
isn't it?
So says the radio, a night-rocked lullaby
and a day-shocked therapy.
Ray slices let in the pure sect
bent over in bright masks to secure themselves
and resurrect.
Anesthesia thins for me to feel through the thick.
Can this cut me to the quick?
I am slitted deep enough to wake
the dead, turning over in my grave irritability
to slap the alarm button for goodness' sake,
certainly not for breakfast's sugary cornflake.

Francis Ford

JEHANNE

Perhaps I should have deafened my ears
to the voices
turned a dumb face
instead of opening my arms
and embracing their promise of paradise
the battlecry of the cross

but it was the thing to do
for who can deny God
say "no" to his command
and go on living
as if the sunrise and sunset
were for us to understand

but I am weary now
weary of those who keep knocking
at my castle door
not wanting to enter
but wanting me to exit
into the darkness of their night
unarmed
except with a faith that must be
approaching madness by now

even the truth seems incidental
except that it is the truth
and who can deny it:
it too is as adamant as God
demanding full devotion

but I have grown weary of this game
of the chains
of the body that longs to sleep
of the mind that longs for peace
of this morbid repartee
that takes me no where
except closer to the flames

and yes
I could not see the promise of paradise
in among the senseless wood
that burned not quietly
but with cries of hysteria
that echoed through the flames
angry with the masquerade

I was afraid of the smoke
rising from my slow-to-burn flesh
wet with the persperation of my fears
(martyrdom does not come easily
I could not lay myself down on the cross
pick up the hammer and the nails)

but I am weary now
weary of the game
those fat with dining play with ease
the theology Christ never explained
I long for the softness of my bed
the freshness of clean clothes
want to be pretty again
in my new frock
my hair smooth and shining in the sun
the lambs bleathing in the meadows

(I've become a skelton in armour
no flesh to cover my bones
no hand to dry my tears)

why did the voices speak to me . . .
I would have made a better wife
a mother
a child
but never a soldier
caught in the devil's folly
(a mouse the cat plays with
to pass the time of a rainy day)

I have grown cold
no longer perspire
on short breath
a gasp
and I will find myself
flames
heart slowing down to a normal pace . . .

there is no death
not even the ashes lost in the wind
can obliterate the sunrise
the sunset
the voices
the prayers
the cross left for others to bear.

Isabella Scavetta

APOLOGY IN 24 LINES (ESPECIALLY FOR MARTHA)

You must forgive me
for my premature senility:
it came stealing in the dark
as silently as my first grey hairs
and leaves me
forgetting names
(occasionally my own)
and phone numbers
and days of the week
especially when I'm busy chasing Yeats
to the isle lake of Innisfree

a feeble apology I know

but I do remember you
in my heart's core
where you stand in God's shadow
always quietly beautiful
and invincible
even to my absentmindedness
which never neglects to remember
those who mark
my latitudes and longitudes
with kind smiles

and you are among them
I assure you.

Isabella Scavetta

FIRST ALABAMA SPRING

The week of rain left you
dreaming of trees in spring
while it did nothing for me
except leave me cursing
at the holes in my shoes
and the threadbare fabric of my umbrella

spring ritual I suppose
as you noted
safe and dry on the inside of the window
I had no change of clothes left
everything being hung out on the line
for the first sunny day
while I waited
chilled to the bone
praying for no pneumonia

how differently we came through the flood
your house barely safe from the rising river
and me baptised by the storm
fully converted to the season.

Isabella Scavetta

LADY

Three husbands
four decades of gossip
five children
and one life
measured out
in afternoon martinis
and late evenings
of alcoholic stupor
waiting for Ulysses
who never came home
but for a moment
long enough
to father another child

platinum hair
and rose frosted cheeks
silver cigarette cases
that sprout cancers
too slow in growing

the lady of leisure
no longer knows
the meaning of sunrises
sterile now
and definitely old
she pretends to be
the thought centre
of a universe
conceived in a cocktail glass.

Isabella Scavetta

BRIDE OF CHRIST

There were no love songs in mother's life
only laments and dirges
a rosary that never ended
prayers that were never prayed

the treasures in heaven rusted
as endurance gave way to madness
that betrayed the cross she bore

a different time or place
she may have learnt
more than the fine points of needlework
the secrets of purgatory
the nursery rhymes of war children
  starving for peace and home

I have a son she lied
having borne only still-born children
and one daughter
who stared back the idiot female
destined for hell on earth

the mass is over
the penance paid
the body and blood devoured
but who will take the soul
the half century of toil
and create her anew
with hopes the colour of rainbows
and dreams crystal clear

the crucifix bleeds
the blood sprouts from her heart's core
and flows over
until the five wounds are a sea of suffering
not even Christ can walk across.

Isabella Scavetta

STILL LIFE

Chardin's "still life"
is intolerably still
with the hunter's catch
lying limp
beside the autumn apple

the trapped rabbits
the shot pheasant
heads hanging
over the table's edge

they are definitely
dead

with no chance
for the coloured plummage
to fly
or the brown fur
to leap
through another summer

they wait for no one
with their out-stretched ears
that listen
for nothing to fear.

Isabella Scavetta

LOVER

Skeleton faced
and acne scarred
(proof that I too survived
the adolescent years)
a sorceress with no magic
to win your heart

I've used the potions
of a witch's brew
left over from a dark age
when I wandered through
graveyards
in search of friendly ghosts
to lead me safely home again

my name echos from your lips
and your lips remain
shadows that fade in dreams
and speak out with painful accuracy
in nightmares

I'll look for you in the morning light
find you hiding in the noon day sun
and pass you by
with a smile
a wave of the hand

you needn't see me
or know that I am.

Isabella Scavetta

WINTERFIELD

Grey and barren
the cotton stands
a cold reminder of a lost season

waiting for the gleaners
who never come
the puffs of white stay
here and there
promising the green of summer

but I have my doubts now
looking at the definitely ugly
spanish moss
hanging like so many dirty cobwebs
or rip van winkle beards
in need of trimming

it is a winter's january

the sky rolls in a battleship grey
and I stay colourless
or at best an emaciated blue grey
that penetrates the clouds
and leaves the world aching
for sunlight.

Isabella Scavetta

NEW YEAR'S JOURNEY

If I slit my throat
and catch the blood in a silver cup
have you drink it up
will you then have your fill of me
and let me be
alone
in those realms
where no one comes to carve my heart out
with a butter knife

I have a one way passport
to nowhere
will board the train in the morning
and go there
with a peanut butter and jelly sandwich
an apple
and a thermos of cold milk

you needn't worry about me
I always eat a balanced meal
say my prayers before going to sleep
and fight back my tears
when you come stalking with your sharpened words
ready to pierce even the safest of my dreams.

Isabella Scavetta

I have layed by my time in the mill
Balancing the morality of the genocide
    Day to day
Myself , , cant in hand
Rolling the rigid bodies onto the sawyers carriage
    Congeling sap
Driping upon my stained boots
Damp upon my sagging overalls
Sweat rolling across my brow
    Steady drip , , down my nose
As a clock ticking away

I offbearer , , facing the saw
The steady scream as the slabs fly
The sawyer and i , , eye to eye
His trust on me to break the slabs free
Every man , , eyes on my back
As i dance and sling the slabs to track

Upon the yard
The old man and i
Working day in , day out
As we heave the timbers about
His bright eyes , shining under that yellow cap
The old man and i , out on the yard
Heaving long timbers , stack after stack
Never rushing , or slacking back
Only a steady hand hold , and laying the rick
Talking and laughing , in the heat of the day
As we amble to the shed , a cold drink of water
Rolling a smoke on the way

Joseph Creel

Sometimes i want to scream loudly
Being around you
Then again
Sometimes i reach for your face , your eyes
Wanting to hold you close
Not speaking , not seeing
Only looking
At times
Your sounds , your emotions
Clear , and indirect , a child's
At times
A searcher , picking through
Your thoughts , your ideas
fasinated by your mind
Hard or happy , . you an old women picking flowers
Your hard face , silent emotions
Leaving me , the quiet cat by the door
Sometimes
Wanting to talk with you
And its not time
Or theres not time
And then again
The time has not come

Joseph Creel

What survivors time makes of use
We at one day , being the grizzly pieces , scattered
Or lost between realities of human form
Clumps of flesh
The singular thrust , no denying for time
That sweet smell of death
We having to make the identities
No other possibility , no backing away
No waiting for tomorrow , . if it rains or not
We survivors upon a cliff , only one path to make

Joseph Creel

ANGELESIA

What do i do of these women
They often make this life
I can look at you , and tell what you are
Or , am i a fool
Am i led to lay by , or
Do i lead her to bed
My colored hand , reading loudly
Speaking clearly , upon her soft skin
Bouquet , hers , upon my face
Sinking my teeth , gently to her flesh
Carried away in her tallons
Fresh ! fresh ! in a winters night
Senses soaking in the cosmos
I there, to breath the fresh air
Led , to warm her cold feet
One on other , cold feet
They togeather cold feet

Joseph Creel

Did you think of me tonight
My mind screams out to you
  Or maybe
    Its a soft wisper
The feeling ingenuous , and loud
  Its warm , and breathing
My thoughts run after you
At a distance , wanting to catch you
Fearing to , , yet still running
Anxiety swelling to talk to you
But waiting upon movement of the moon
Your presence coloring my mind
We togeather in soft dreams
  At times
  Soft dreams
    At times
      Susan speaking
    At times
    Soft dreams

Joseph Creel

Beneath this embroidery
of half-truths and evasions
woven for our own protection,
we have lived our lives closely
in the dark womb
of drowsy-eyed ignorance.
Together we have mended snags
before an excess of cold air
was allowed to creep in.
Now we find our warm protection
ripped cruelly to shreds,
with no time to repair
before the advancing winter.
Perhaps before the next snow
we can stitch together the remnants,
mother, in a unity born of
desire instead of fear.

Marie Godwin

From the outer edges
of respectability we arrive —
from the land of brittle-boned orphans
and ashen-skinned survivors —
who have seen our sisters
lie dying in alleys,
wombs bleeding into gravel.
We have plunged in raw-fisted anger
through waves of bitterness,
with no one but ourselves
to smooth our broken edges.
But now we emerge —
with an assurance born of time —
no longer content
to surrender our desires
into the hands of those
who would sit back
and watch as others bleed.

Marie Godwin

WILLEO HOLLOW

The sun has rested well
    This night past
Though it has not yet reached Roswell town
That orb is gushing over the hills
    East of here
Geysers of its substance rising fast
Brush the sky a lighter blue
As the sun approaches the nearest hills
Birds sing and speak of its arrival
    Throughout the hollow
In solitude
Just i and the old oak on this hillside
We suddenly feel crowded as the sun arrives
We are swelled by so much song
Knowing its coming
But not able to sence just when the sun arrives
Like a cat at a distance, then upon us
The sun inches forward up our hill
The giant oak with open arms welcomes her
As sparkling arrows are cast upon our ground
Posed amoung the yellow eyes of young flowers
I embrace this daystar
Another breath of life morning
Born in our hollow near Roswell town

Joseph Creel

Cold morning sunlight creeps slowly
over sheets stained with beer
and apple juice.
I rise silently from your bed,
while you cry out inside of me still.
The rhythm of your dancing
lingers on in my body;
The scent of your hair
remains on my lips.
I watch your breath rise and fall,
and then, my arms full of memories,
I quietly close the door.

Marie Godwin

How nice, nice to feel,
so good about the kill,
so good about slaughtering all the seals,
so good about clubbing them in the head,
so good about beating them till they're dead.

It's so wonderful to know
that we're doing it all for dough,
that we're doing it in the snow,
that they don't even know.

It's so great to think,
that they're giving us their lives,
that we're skinning them with our knives.

We're so grateful to the seals,
for giving us the kills.

They're gone!

Booth Gunter

Clouds of swirling floating chirping black wingers,
Drifting down on some old oak their claws like clingers.
Everywhere I look they play
Everywhere I look today.

Beaks southward they travel,
Life's mysteries to unravel.
Tomorrow they'll be gone,
Tomorrow they're moving on.

Yesterday they came and many did I count,
As I stood there upon the mount.
But four and twenty less in the sky,
When today I serve Blackbird Pie.

Booth Gunter

Every morning a new life is born
And every night an old one torn.
Every star must fall
And briefly light the sky for all.
A new star is shining bright
Penetrating the gloomy night.
Must also this fair star fall?
"Nay," the mother-star did call.
"Yea," said He who directs them all.
With a flickering flash the night is lit
Into angel's garb the star is fit.
A star falling is never feared.
No cause to shed tears.
But a burned out orb as fair as he,
Will forever light the heart of thee.

Booth Gunter

Last night I began to wonder
Why the wind was blowing.
Then I realized it was only showing
Its strength to those obsessed with knowing.

Then I began to wonder,
Where is the wind going?
So I asked the trees
And got down on my knees.

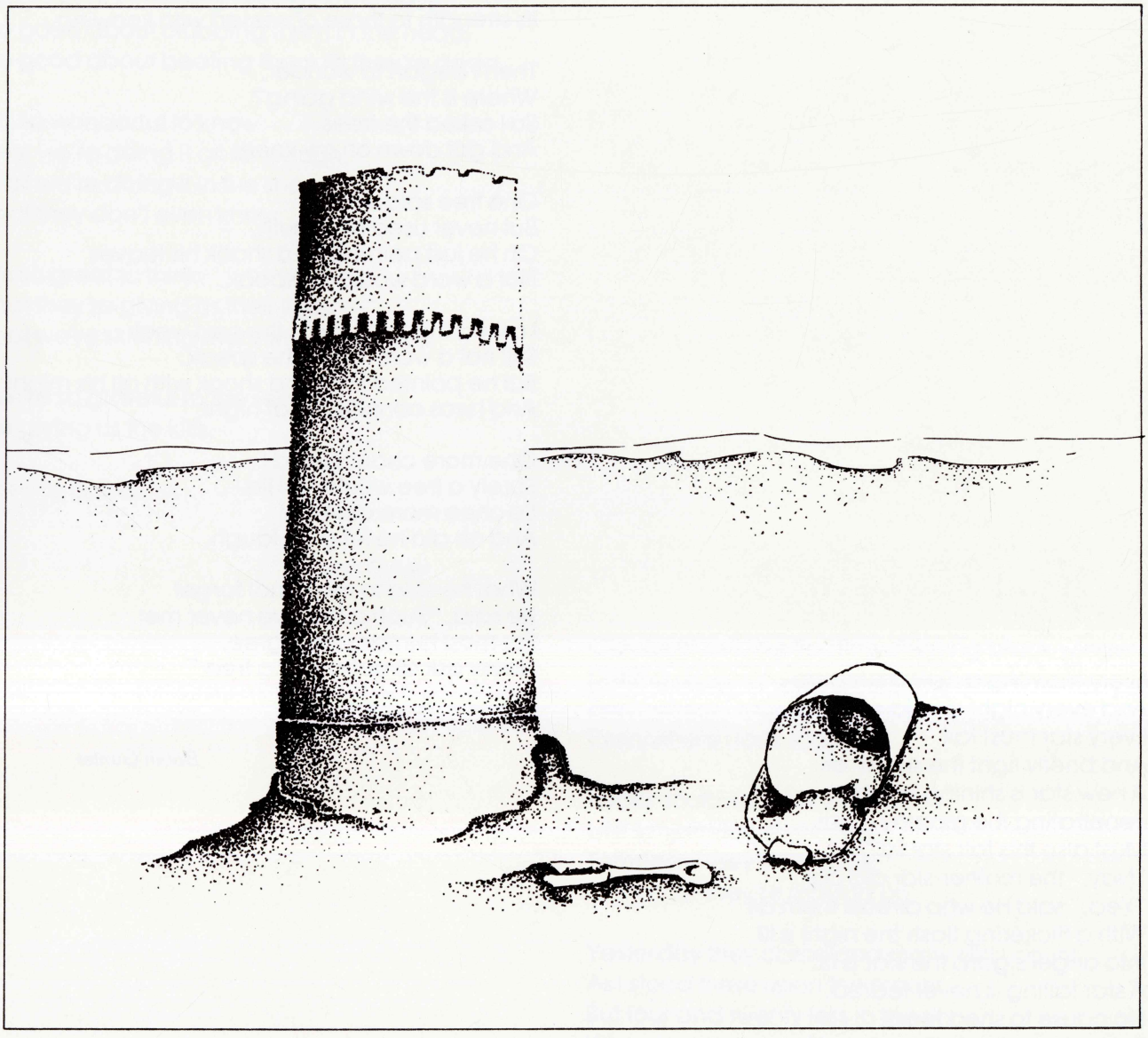
One tree said south
But never used his mouth.
Oh he just pointed and shook his leaves
Not a word would he speak.

I asked the tree again the next week
Still not a word would he speak.
But he pointed East and shook with all his might
And I was confused that night.

One more chance said I
Surely a tree would not lie.
So once more did I ask
And oh did he let go a laugh.

What he said to me I'll not forget
He said, "Such a fool I've never met.
For most humans will agree,
Never ask directions of a tree."

Booth Gunter



Lynn McPherson

From my tower room
I watch the world go by
Many, many faces
Going many different places
I see them in love
I see them in hate
From my tower room
Far above.

Sitting silently in my lofty perch
I see them living
Loving
But no stairs led from this tower room
No one can reach me
No one can see me
And though I know and love them all
They know not this
They know not me
The lonely lady in the tower room.

From my tower room
I watch the world go by
Without me.

Nadine Antaillia

Dave Richardson

Karen Fullerton

SOMETIMES

sometimes i dream i'm a daddy and i
tell bedtime stories , , , and read the
paper and smoke a pipe and then . . .
little children hug at my knees and
i feel smothered and run away

sometimes i dream i'm a doctor and
i give shots and perform operations
and save lives and then i see the
blood ooze out and i get scared and
don't want to dream doctor anymore

one day i drempt i was a singer and
i made lots of albums and lots of
money and i had a fan club but then
my record broke and i had to quit
dreaming singer

when i was little i used to dream
i'd be a fireman so the other day
i decided to dream fireman again
and i slid down poles and put out
fires and rescued cats and then i
burnt myself with a match and i
cried alot and went to sleep

a few minutes ago i wanted to dream
cowboys and indians so i got out my bow
and arrows and my gun and my tomahawk
and my hat and the indian shot his arrow
at the cowboy and the cowboy shot his
gun at the indian

i must be dreaming doctor right now
cause ther's blood oozing out of

Chuck Richards

Karen Fullerton

Mr. Cornerstone, Are You Dead Yet?

When he asked little Eugenie why the bells were ringing at such an ungodly hour, she responded by fetching two aspirin, a glass of water and a sugar cube. She dropped the cube into the water and handed the aspirin to him, saying, "Monsieur, you've been out flirting all night again, is it not so?"

"More or less", came the haggard answer.

Throwing a braid over her shoulder, Eugenie's pudgy face contorted into a puzzled expression as she asked, "Why do you flirt all night, but wake with only a headache instead of a girl? Is this the way the Americans do it?"

"No, I think I'm fairly unidque in that respect . . . hey, is today a holiday or what? Those bells seem to be getting louder all the time".

"Monsieur, I am sorry, but there are no bells ringing except in your head. They mourn the death of many brain cells, I'm sure."

"Oh, shit."

"What does that mean?" asked Eugenie innocently.

"It's uh . . . not too nice, really . . . uh . . ."

"Does it mean c'est la vie?"

"Yes, Yes! That's it! C'est la vie. In English, we say it as 'that's life', but sometimes we say, 'Oh shit'. Sort of a colloquial term, you know."

"I see. Well, thank you for the English lesson and I hope you've learned your lesson and don't drink and flirt so much, Monsieur."

"Thank you Eugenie, have a nice day at school and stay out of trouble."

"Oh, I will", she called over her shoulder as she bounded out the door, "I'm not like you!"

As the door closed, and the sound of Eugenie's laughing voice faded, Judas Cornerstone again turned his attention to the sock he had half put on his foot earlier. He groggily went through the motions of preparing for his class and was soon out the door.

Walking in the cool morning air, he felt revived and began to hum, then to sing and then to dance. Finally he threw down his books and danced on the bridge as a train passed beneath him. He sat down and took out his journal. In it he wrote, "Hate causes pain, insanity, imbalance, death."

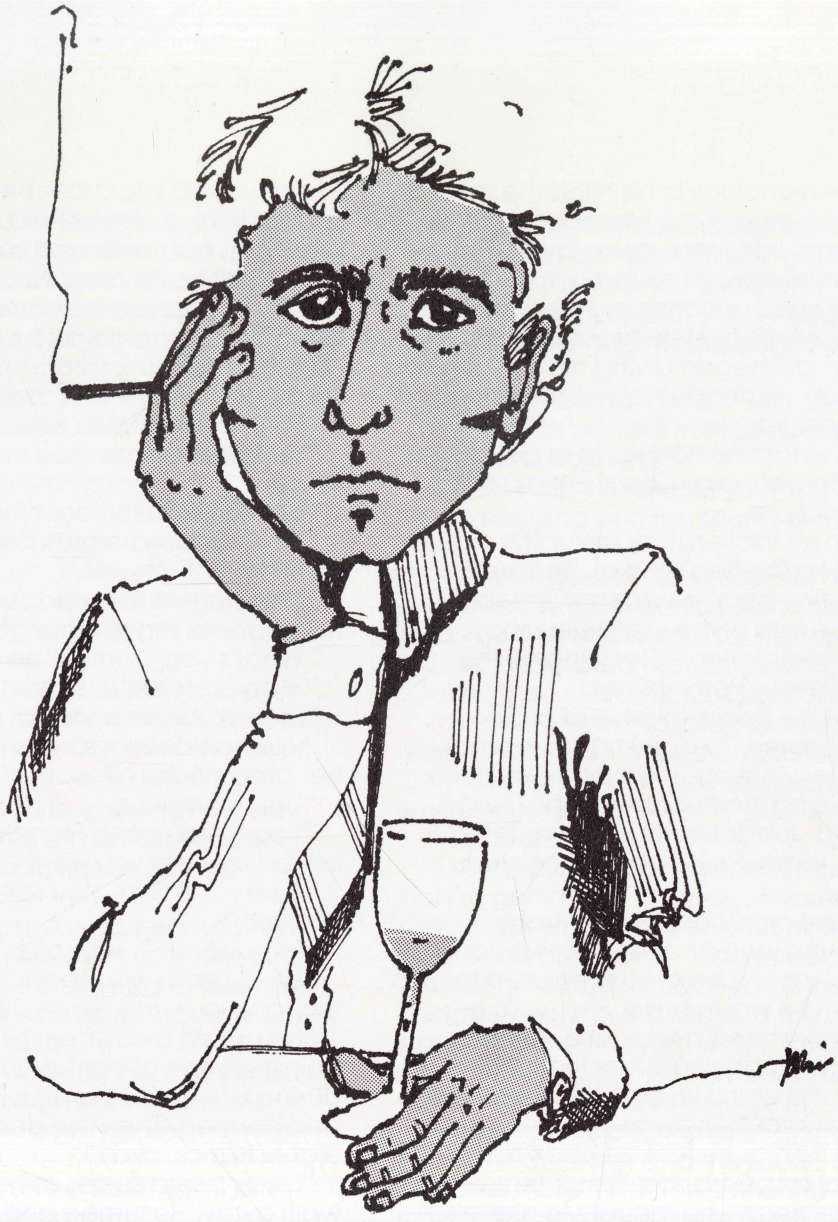
Soon he was at the station, awaiting the train that would whisk him into Paris and his morning affairs. Standing on the platform he noticed two little girls playing hopscotch as their young mothers looked on. Upon closer examination, Judas noticed that there were no lines drawn. With ribbons and pigtails flying, the children leaped into spaces known only to themselves in their game of "meta-physical hopscotch". Judas was impressed.

Screeching to a halt, the train arrived, the people boarded, and it again thundered down the tracks. Judas looked out the window and watched the landscape rush past. It appeared to him that Paris was rising with the morning sun. He noted the activity of the towns they passed, and as clouds hung heavily in a sky of azure, he concluded that it was altogether quite pleasant.

Judas then noticed a young woman staring intently at his crotch. He didn't know if she knew that he knew, but Judas was feeling that she knew more all the time. He squirmed in his seat and tried to pretend he was looking out the window when he noticed her firm breasts beneath her blue sweater, and the pearls strung gently round her neck. Shifting his attention outside the window, he realized that Paris was not the only thing rising. He tried desperately to think about something else, but it was altogether quite hard.

Judas was sweating profusely when he realized that the young woman was one of the mothers of the children who played meta-physical hopscotch; and that she was not looking at his crotch at all, but the magazine cover which was on the seat next to him. Judas nearly fainted. The train came to a halt, the young mothers collected their children, Judas tried to collect himself, and they all got off.

Judas made his way out of the station and plopped into a chair at the nearest cafe. He ordered wine and smoked a cigarette. As he drank, he began to feel philasophical. "Like a grand organism, Paris lives and breathes." He spoke softly to himself as he exhaled the strong vapors of his cigarette. "Taxis dart about like corpuscles through the vein-like



Robin Nance

streets." He continued with such reflection through several glasses of wine until he felt that he was sufficiently prepared to go to class.

The professor had already begun lecturing when Judas entered and clumsily found a chair, smiling at a Moraccan girl as he sat down. The class, which dealt with International politics, was taught by a former, "Voice of America", broadcaster. Much to his chagrin, Judas spent most of the class meetings winking at girls, and making lewd comments during the breaks. Needless to say, the professor was not impressed with the scholarly "antihabits", which Judas consistantly demonstrated. On this particular day, however, Judas not only participated, but amazed the entire class with an impassioned oratory prompted by the issue of the theory of mutually assured destruction, or MAD, for short. Nuclear weapons was a conept which breathed indignation into his very being, and with the lubrication provided by his morning consumption, Judas railed against the "perverse and disgusting" nature of the men who have conceived such devices.

Judas was building to a crescendo as the class sat in awe, and the professor was incredulous. It was the first time that any of them had heard him say anything that wasn't related to sex. Roaring into his conclusion, Judas blurted, "And one may well ask, is MAD sane?" There was total silence as the class waited for the answer to his rhetorical question. Judas raised his arm in a powerful gesture, inhaled deeply, and passed out.

Judas sat at a cafe table and reflected on the

morning. The thing which stuck in his mind the most, were the large, brown eyes of the Moraccan girl which gradually came into focus as he lay on the floor. There was a small crowd around him, for apparantly, he remained unconscious for quite awhile. The thing that brought him around was when the Moraccan girl began giving him mouth-to-mouth resussitation. As he savored what he deemed a well deserved glass of wine, he concluded that if that's what one had to do to get a french kiss from a Moraccan girl, he'd just as soon pursue some other culture.

Judas got up from his table rather abruptly and purposefully set out for the flea market. He wasn't exactly sure why. "My mission is a secret", he said to himself. "Perhaps the fate of the world depends upon its successful completion." Stepping off the subway train, he added, "Perhaps not."

Upon his arrival at the flea-market, Judas discarded his shirt for another, bought a shinny black tie, a double breasted jacket, and baggy trousers. He traded his remaining clothes for a "Man From Uncle" decoder ring. Judas triumphantly entered the subway station, ready for his next destination, whatever it might be.

Finding a seat in the crowded subway train, Judas noticed a young woman sitting across from him. She reminded him of a babysitter he used to have regularly when he was a child. She wore a tight sweater and spike heels and spoke with an adorable lisp. The girl across from him fit that description exactly. He didn't know if she too lisped, but he intended to find out. She was beautiful, and Judas felt his blood rush as he looked upon her sensual yet innocent appearance. He smiled at her, and as he said, "Hello", he thought to himself, "This is what life is all about."

"Go to Hell, creep", she said, moving to another seat. Judas got off at the next stop.

He walked along in the late afternoon sunlight and noticed a fruit truck which had overturned. People scurried about trying to recover the former contents which now littered the street. "The victims of revolution", he said to himself, as people picked up those melons which were not too damaged to be sold.

Feeling rather dejected, Judas sat at a cafe table and contemplated the day. A dog walked up to a white car parked beside the curb, raised his hind leg in the traditional salute to such vehicles, and wandered on. Suddenly, Judas was inspired. The cloud which had seemed to hang over him instantly disapated. He quickly took out his journal and scribbled these lines: "Car exhust, animal juices . . . the city dies, and reproduces."

Lights flashed with news of the coming night, as Judas walked into a favorite area of the city. Beneath a street light, Judas beheld a young woman wearing blue satin hot pants and a bathing suit top. He was expecting her to cross the street when the traffic permitted, and wondered why she remained beneath the street light for no apparant reason. "She must be very said", he thought to himself. "She probably needs someone to talk to."

"Hello", said Judas politely.

"Hello", she answered in a very sensual tone of voice.

"How are you this evening?"

"One hundred-eighty francs", came her curt, business-like answer.

"Oh, that's nice", said Judas, thinking she has made some sort of local greeting.

"What's your name?" he asked.

"Mary . . . what's yours?"

"Judas", he responded, somewhat shyly.

"How romantic . . .", she purred, as she placed her arm around his waist. "Where are you from?"

"Uh . . . America . . .", he said.

"You speak good French for an American, I almost thought you were German."

"Gee . . . thanks. You speak pretty good French yourself."

"I am French", she said.

"Uh . . . gosh, you speak French so good, I almost thought you were German!"

She pulled away from him, her face twisted with an expression of confusion. After a long pause, during which she stared at him, she said "Sank you", and blushed. Then she added, "One hundred-eighty francs, okay?"

"Okay", said Judas as he smiled and turned to walk away. He turned and waved, calling over his shoulder, "One hundred-eighty francs!" then disappeared into the crowd of people which walked along the dimly lit boulevard.

The girl beneath the street lamp sighed heavily, shook her head, and smiled.

There was a pulsating beat which seemed to pervade the smoky and enticing atmosphere of the bar which Judas entered after a short time. Faces seemed blurred, sound seemed to echo, Judas seemed drunk.

He walked to the bar, but not until after experiencing the sensation that everyone in the bar was vaugely familiar. With a surge of joy, Judas came to the conclusion that he was at his high school reunion. "Imagine that!" he said aloud. "A high school reunion at a bar in Paris. Who in the world had the idea? And nobody told me about it. It must have been a surprise. Wow . . . a surprise high school reunion party for me . . . gosh, I must be the luckiest guy in the world." He wiped a tear from the

corner of his eye and stood before the bartender, who waited patiently to take his order. Judas stuck out his hand and said, "Judas Smith, class of '74". The bartender reluctantly shook his hand and said, "Pierre La Chaise". After a rather embarrassing pause, during which Judas nodded his head and smiled incessantly, he added, "bartender".

Sitting at a table with his drink, Judas was soon joined by a group of people who immediately integrated him into their conversation.

"Are you into the immortality of the soul?" asked a heavy set girl with long blonde hair done in braids.

"Uh . . . yeah. Sometimes . . . especially on weekends", admitted Judas without having a clue as to what she was refering to.

"Let'a dance", she said huskily as she siezed his hand and pulled him onto the dance floor. As they walzed, she brushed her cheek against his and whispered, "I'm an agnostic . . . how about you?"

"My doctor says if I don't quite smoking I will be too, but for now I'm just a little bit ashtmatic when there is alot of pollen in the air, it's worst in the spring."

"So, you're astmatic . . .", she breathed heavily into his ear. "I should have known by your accent."

When the music ended they returned to their table to find that a very somber mood had appeared to have infiltrated the conversation.

"Yes me sister left Dublin when she was nineteen, went to America, and married a bloke from one of those weirdo religions," said a handsome man at the table.

"Gee, which one?" asked a concerned looking brunette, adding "There are so many."

"Protestant . . .", he trailed off gravely. After an uncomfortable silence, a girl at the table asked softly, "How did your parents take it, Pat?"

"I suppose they'll survive. It was a shock. A real shock." Judas excused himself and went to the bathroom.

When he got back, the table was empty, and the people he'd just met were nowhere to be found. He picked up a rum stained napkin and read a message from the woman he'd danced with. It read: I'm sorry, but I just don't think it will work. My father plays golf with astmatics sometimes, but I couldn't bear to tell him that I, his own daughter, was in love with one. Farewell, Eve.

Judas walked alone in the now drizzling night. He lit a cigarette and made his way to the subway station. He stood alone on the subway platform, and listened to the echo of the sound of the trains within the cavernous underground network. Looking up, he noticed a woman sitting alone on the other side of the tracks and he instantly realized that she was the most beautiful site he had ever seen. He froze on the platform and began to try to speak. "I'd . . . I'd . . ."

"Are you talking to me?" she asked in a melodic voice. Judas was still trying to say something, but she didn't know what.

"I'd . . . I'd . . . I'd die for you!" he cried out, his voice echoing with the sound of the approaching train.

"Oh, you would? How nice. But I'd settle for dinner and a show. What do you say? The night is still young and you can always die for me later, if you insist."

Judas remained motionless and again tried to speak. "I'd . . . I'd . . . ddd . . . da . . . die . . . fff . . . fff . . ."

"I know, I know," said the woman on the other side, "That much I could understand. But please don't die for me until you've paid the tab." She smiled and winked.

"I'd . . . die . . . for . . ."

"I must say, you certainly have a way with words, but I'm getting the impression you are a bit too preoccupied to really enjoy a night on the town, so I'd best be on my way." She turned her head toward the train which approached on the tracks ahead.

Judas stood on the edge of the platform and stared into the tiny light which became larger and more blinding, as the train approached. "I'm not afraid to die for what I believe in," he said calmly.

Judas watched as the red lights disappeared into the blackness, and the sound of the train became more faint. The soft echo of the once thunderous sound of the train on the tracks lingered. "I'm not afraid to die for what I believe in," said Judas in a whisper. But he was. Someday he would.

"Another rough night, Monsieur?" little Eugenie's voice woke Judas as he lay on the living room couch.

"Good morning," he groaned.

"You've been out flirting again haven't you?"

"Something like that, hey, what's with the construction at this hour of the morning?"

"There is no construction work going on outside, Monsieur," she said as she handed him a glass of water, a sugar cube and two aspirin. "The construction is going on in your head." Her eyes were very large and blue. She looked at him and nodded, her braids hanging against her pudgy face.

"Oh, shit," moaned Judas.

"Oh, no Monsieur, c'est la vie."

Dave Richardson

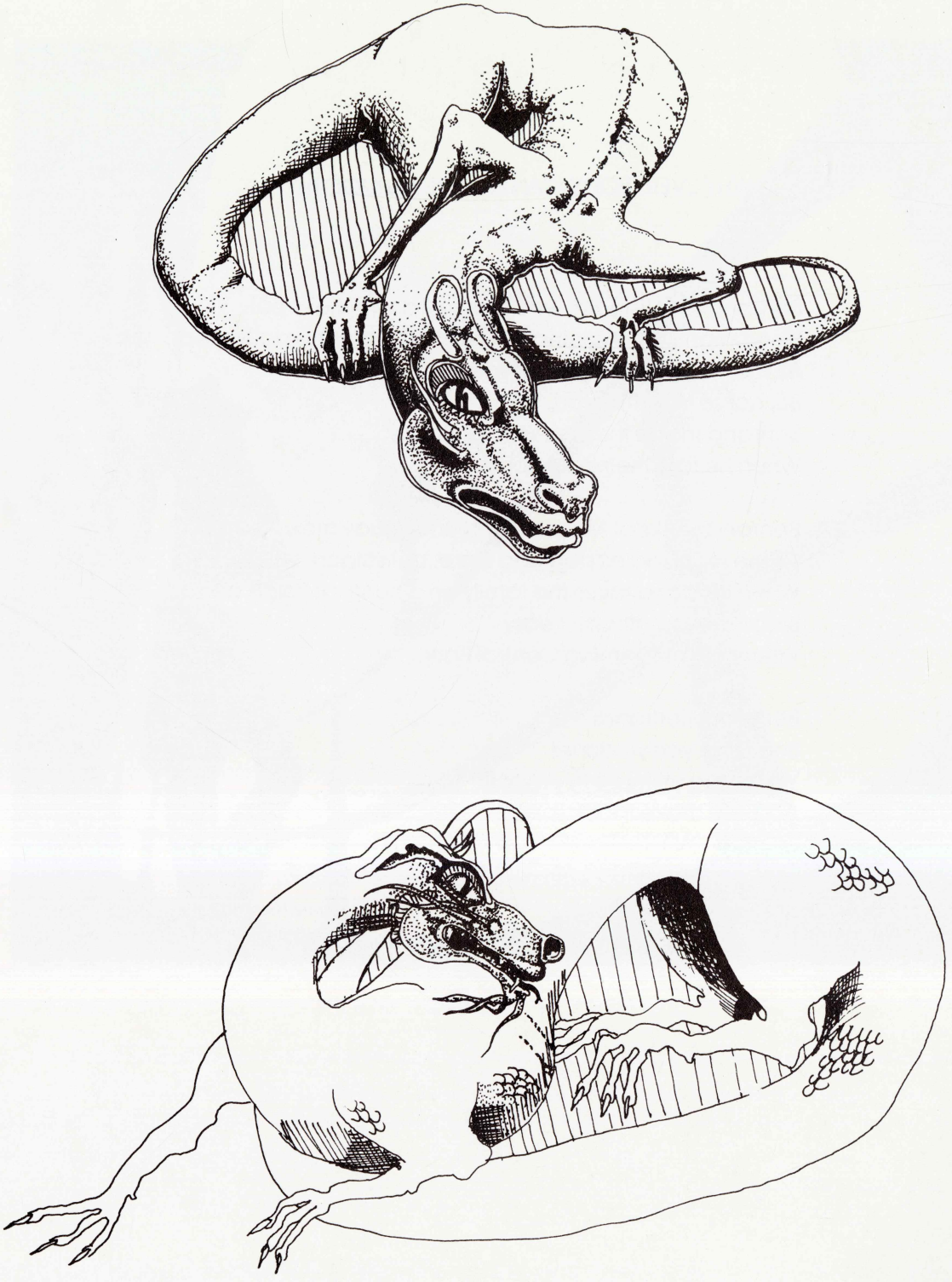
WHY EVERYBODY WANTS TO BE A VISIGOTH

Bertrand is a Visigoth, who lives just down the street.
His woman wears a loincloth, and prepares his daily meat.
All the neighbors love them dearly,
But not so from the start.
Bertrand made them see more clearly
When he tore their cars apart.

Bertrand works at Macey's and on Sunday mows the lawn.
All the local ladies stop and stare, but seldom yawn.
When Bertrand takes the family on a hunt, it often is a lark.
Stalking mamoths isn't easy
When you're roaming Central Park.

Bertrand, Bertrand!
See what you've done!
You're the ultimate in Visigoth
And you make it look so fun!

Dave Richardson



Robin Nance

A HEART'S SONG

Friendships are not made.
They are planted, grown, cultivated and reaped —
Even though they often spring forth
Like a dandelion.

And like a dandelion,
They are beautiful and wispy.
Be careful not to scatter the vital parts.
For once you do, the friendship is lost.
True, the parts could be regathered;
But never reassembled.

Still, do not be afraid
To reach for that flighty friendship.
Because if it is worth having,
It will remain strong enough
To hold the bond of shared dreams.
The surface may be tossed, but the
Roots go deep and hold steadfast.

Take heed
That you are rooted by your dreams.
They are the things that last the longest,
Yet die the easiest.

Barb Byham

THE CIRCLE AND THE SQUARE

The Circle said to the square,
"By my word, 'tis not fair
For me to be such a perfect sphere,
While your faults are so plainly clear."

The square replied to the latter,
"Your perimeter is large, but your head is fatter.
I have inside me a square interior,
Such a pity you are so inferior."

The two of them went on this way,
Their argument lasting all the day,
But all their bickering was in waste
For during their fight they were both erased.

James Knowles

IS IT ALL WORTH IT?

You said you had a
rainbow to catch
your pot of gold
is waiting
at the end
and so you
travel on
leaving behind
many smiling faces
you've no time for.
When you finally
reach your destination
and think of all
the love
you've left behind . . .

How much will your
gold buy then?